

pendence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7691 of July 18, 2003

Captive Nations Week, 2003

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

During Captive Nations Week, first declared in 1959 as a statement against the continuing Communist domination of Eastern Europe, America expresses its dedication to freedom and democracy. While many countries around the world uphold these principles, millions of people still live under regimes that violate their citizens' rights daily. In countries such as Burma and Iran, citizens lack the right to choose their government, speak out against oppression, and practice their religion freely. The despot who rules Cuba imprisons political opponents and crushes peaceful opposition, while in North Korea hundreds of thousands languish in prison camps and citizens suffer from malnutrition as the regime pursues weapons of mass destruction. Violence, corruption, and mismanagement reign in Zimbabwe and an authoritarian government in Belarus smothers political dissent.

Yet the cause of freedom is advancing. With the demise of the brutal regime of Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi people are no longer captives in their own country. Their freedom is evidence of the fall of one of the most oppressive dictators in history. Today, American and coalition forces are helping to restore civil order and provide critical humanitarian aid to the Iraqi people. Iraqis are now meeting openly and freely to discuss the future of their country. The United States vows to continue to work with those trying to bring about peaceful democratic change and greater respect for human rights.

The Congress, by Joint Resolution approved July 17, 1959, (73 Stat. 212), has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation designating the third week in July of each year as "Captive Nations Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim July 20 through July 26, 2003, as Captive Nations Week. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities and to reaffirm their commitment to all those seeking liberty, justice, and self-determination.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of July, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7692 of July 24, 2003**National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day, 2003**

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

When North Korean troops invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950, the United States took immediate action to defend the freedom of a people unjustly attacked. Leading a coalition of 20 other countries, American and South Korean troops fought to advance liberty and opportunity and to overcome cruelty and repression. More than 1.7 million Americans faced forbidding terrain and harsh combat in battles such as Pork Chop Hill, Heartbreak Ridge, the Pusan Perimeter, and the Chosin Reservoir. Throughout the conflict, the members of our Armed Forces demonstrated extraordinary honor, skill, and courage.

The Military Armistice Agreement of July 27, 1953, ended 3 years of bitter warfare on the Korean Peninsula and stopped the spread of Communism in Korea, signaling to the world America's resolve to stand against tyranny and totalitarian regimes. Fifty years later, our Nation remains grateful for the bravery and sacrifice of our Korean War veterans. They defended human freedom, liberated the oppressed, and selflessly protected the democratic ideals that made our Nation strong. Their efforts reflect the honorable and decent spirit of America. More than 34,000 of America's service men and women gave their lives in battle in the Korean War. As we continue our fight to extend freedom today, we remember and honor their sacrifices and those of their families.

Thanks in large measure to the veterans of the Korean War, South Korea today stands as a shining example of the economic and social benefits of democracy. As we observe the 50th anniversary of the Armistice, America looks forward to the day when the stability of the Korean Peninsula is built on peaceful reconciliation of North and South. We pledge to work with the Republic of Korea to further our shared values of democracy, human rights, and free enterprise. And we will continue to build upon the comprehensive and dynamic relationship between our two nations to promote peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia.

The Congress, by Public Law 104–19 as amended (36 U.S.C. 127), has designated July 27, 2003, as “National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day” and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim July 27, 2003, as National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day. I call upon all Americans to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities that honor and give thanks to our distinguished Korean War veterans. I also ask Federal departments and agencies and interested groups, organizations, and individuals to fly the flag of the United States at half-staff on July 27, 2003, in memory of the Americans who died as a result of their service in the Korean War.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of July, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of